

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY, HONG KONG BRANCH

APRIL NEWSLETTER

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20th April, 2004

Council members 2004-2005

Dr. Patrick Hase, President	Mr. Robert Nield, Vice President
Dr. Elizabeth Sinn, Vice President	Rev. Carl Smith, Hon. Vice President
Mr. Philip Stockton, Hon. Treasurer	Mr. David McKellar, Hon. Secretary
Miss Julia Chan, Hon. Librarian	Dr. Peter Halliday, Hon. Editor of Journals
Dr. Janet Lee Scott, Hon. Activities Co-ordinator	Mrs. Valery Garrett, Member
Mrs. May Holdsworth, Member	Mr. Tim Ko, Member
Mr. Peter Stuckey, Member	Dr. Joseph Ting, Member
Mr. Jason Wordie, Member	Dr. Dan Waters, Immediate Past President
Mr. Chan Kwok-shing, Co-opted Member	Mr. Geoffrey Emerson, Co-opted Member
Mr. Robert Horsnell, Co-opted Member	Dr. Betty Wei, Co-opted Member
Miss Josephine Wong, Co-opted Member	

“A History of Suicides in Hong Kong” was the title of a very interesting talk given at the Hong Kong Museum of History, Tsimshatsui East, by Dr. Peter Halliday, RAS Council Member and Hon. Editor of the RAS Journal, on 13th February 2004. Before his retirement, Dr. Halliday was Chief of Police in Shatin for many years and his interest in this subject was stimulated by his work; all suicides have to be investigated by the Police.

Aided by an excellent Powerpoint presentation, Dr. Halliday pointed out that ever since the first mention in the English press of suicide in Hong Kong, in 1845, to the present, his research shows that suicide rates have not significantly changed. In answer to the often-asked question, “Does media coverage cause an increase in the number of suicides?”, Dr. Halliday said this is true only amongst people who have already been contemplating suicide. Despite the media reports of young people being especially prone, statistics show that suicides are mainly committed by people in great pain or with mental illness. Most so-called preventive measures are ineffective, with one exception – supervisors should be closer to subordinates because changes in behaviour can often be seen. Closer attention may spot trouble. And, he pointed out that, for example, in the year 2000, 99.9% did not kill themselves, so we shouldn’t be too worried about excessive media coverage.

Our February programme ended on the 27th with a most stimulating talk, illustrated with slides, by Professor Greg Thomas. Dr Thomas spoke about the different ways the Qing summer palace of Yuanmingyuan was perceived by Europeans over its history. Yuanmingyuan, or the Garden of Perfect Brightness, was built by the emperor Kangxi in 1709 and completed by his grandson Qianlong in 1744.

Professor Thomas is an art historian with a special interest in 19th-century French art. He said that he was not a China expert, but became interested in Yuanmingyuan as a site of cultural exchange through his study of European aesthetic taste. The different meanings Yuanmingyuan had for Europeans passed through four phases: it was seen as a quintessential embodiment of imperial authority and a model of garden design; with Lord Macartney's mission, it was the site of diplomatic negotiations; when it was sacked and plundered in 1860, it stood as a symbol of imperial decadence; lastly, as the loot reached Europe, it became the source of beautiful objects of art for display in palaces and museums. Showing unpublished photographs of Empress Eugenie's Chinese exhibition, Dr Thomas suggested that they demonstrated an interesting inversion: Chinese cultural artefacts came to mirror France's own royal cultural system. The final irony was that Europe, having captured China's culture, made it part of its own.

To the member of the audience who asked if General Charles Gordon was present at the sacking of Yuanmingyuan, the answer is yes. Gordon was a young captain at the time, and wrote after the destruction: '[We] went out, and, after pillaging it, burned the whole place, destroying in a Vandal-like manner most valuable property which would not be replaced for four millions . . . you can scarcely imagine the beauty and magnificence of the places we burnt. . . these palaces were so large, and we were so pressed for time, that we could not plunder them carefully.'

John Wilson was the member who asked the question, and he has sent us the following note:-

“The attached extract from Chambers Biographical Dictionary might be of interest to members who attended Dr. Thomas' interesting talk on the Summer Palace. It explains my question about Gordon of Khartoum, which otherwise seemed inappropriate:

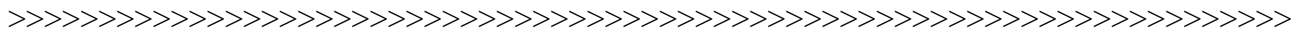
“**Charles George GORDON** (1833-85), British soldier, was born at Woolwich, January 28 and descended from a cadet branch of the House of Huntly. (See GORDON family.) He entered Woolwich Academy in 1847, and the Royal Engineers in 1852; served before Sebastopol from January 1855 to the end of the siege; and was engaged in surveying the new frontiers between Turkey and Russia (1856-57). In 1860 he went to China and took part in the capture of Peking and the destruction of the Summer Palace. In command of a Chinese force (1863-64), he fought thirty-three actions against the Taipings and took numerous walled towns, effectually crushing the formidable rebellion – a feat that placed 'Chinese Gordon' in the foremost rank of the soldiers of his day.

Early in 1884 he was asked by the British government to proceed once more to the Sudan to relieve the garrisons in Egypt which were in rebel territory. A month after he reached Khartoum it was invested by the troops of the Mahdi. The siege had lasted five months when a relief expedition was organized in England. In September the advance up the Nile began, and early in November the troops entered the Sudan and the advance guard arrived on January 28, 1885, in the neighbourhood of Khartoum. It was too late. The place had been taken two days earlier, and Gordon had been murdered on the palace steps. The national memorial is the Gordon Boys' School at Woking.”

[From Chambers' Biographical Dictionary, Revised Edition 1984]

We had a successful AGM and Annual Dinner at the Hong Kong Club on 19th March, with a full house of over 80 members and guests. We were particularly pleased to see so many members attend our AGM, showing your interest in the Society and our plans for the future. A copy of the President's report and other reports tabled at the AGM are included in this newsletter. There being no new nominations, existing members of Council were re-elected for the coming year, and the existing co-opted members were again co-opted on to Council. Mr. Robert Nield was replaced as Hon. Treasurer by Mr. Philip Stockton; Robert will remain as Vice President. Mr. Peter Stuckey was replaced as Hon. Secretary by Mr. Robert McKellar; Peter will remain as a member of Council.

Dr. Conner is the author of several books, including *Oriental Architecture in the West* (1979), and *George Chinnery 1774-1852, artist of India and the China Coast* (1993). He has organised a number of museum exhibitions exploring the relationships between 'Eastern' and 'Western' cultures: these have included *William Alexander, an English artist in Imperial China* (1981), and *The China Trade 1600-1860* (Brighton Museums, 1986). He has contributed regularly to *Apollo*, *Art History*, *Arts of Asia*, the magazine *Antiques* and other periodicals. Copies of his book on George Chinnery will be on sale at the talk.



City Hall Lecture

Friday, 14th May

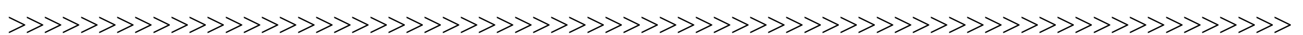
Bhutan: a “just-in-time” polity

- Speaker:** Dr. Brian Shaw and Professor Anthony Hedley
- Time:** 6:15 p.m.
- Venue:** Extension Activities Room, 8/F, City Hall High Block, Central
- Cost:** The lecture is free and open to the public.
- Booking:** No booking is required.

Bhutan, a mountainous kingdom in the eastern Himalayas between China and India, has been a member of the United Nations since 1971, and presents many interesting and indeed unique characteristics. This talk will briefly review for members some salient aspects of Bhutanese history, politics and society (particularly since 1972) and will provide members with a good introduction to this region. Some representative slides will also be shown.

Dr Brian Shaw (who taught international politics at the University of Hong Kong from 1970 to 1990) has visited Bhutan at least once a year from 1980, and traveled extensively throughout the kingdom. He led a group of Society members to Bhutan in 1980, and more recently in 2002 and 2003. He has contributed commentary on Bhutan to various media including the now defunct *Asiaweek* and the former *Asia Yearbook* (*Far Eastern Economic Review*), and more recently *South Asia 2004* (Europa Publications).

Professor A.J. Hedley, Professor of Community Medicine, University of Hong Kong, will illustrate aspects of Bhutan with slides taken during the 2002 Society visit. We hope also to have a small display of photographs for members to review.



Hong Kong Museum of History Lecture

Friday, 21st May

Hong Hong’s Popular Religion in Action

This talk is jointly sponsored by the Royal Asiatic Society and the Hong Kong Anthropological Society

- Speaker:** Dr. Tik-sang Liu
- Time:** *6:30 p.m.
- Venue:** * Lecture Hall, G/F, Museum of History, 100 Chatham Road South, Tsim Sha Tsui
- Cost:** The lecture is free and open to the public.
- Booking:** No booking is required.
- Parking:** Parking is available. Please give your car reg. no. to Josephine Wong, tel. 2724 9034 or Email to: jolkwong@lcsd.gov.hk if you wish to park at the museum.

People arrange temple festivals to celebrate their patron deity’s birthday, organize Jiao festivals to purify their community with the belief of cosmic renewal. As an essential aspect of local culture, popular religion has a close relationship with every aspect of people’s daily life. It is a window for us to understand local culture

Membership and Finances

Over the year, our Membership has held up well. The Society has grown by about 4½% since this time last year, to a total membership of 650. As of today, the Society consists of 474 Annual Members (an increase of just under 3%) and 176 Life Members (an increase of 9%). Of these 650 Members, 511 are resident in Hong Kong, and 139 are resident abroad: both categories of Membership have shown significant increases. We also have 28 Institutional Members (6 Institutional Members and 22 Honorary Institutional Members), an increase of 40% over last year, a most welcome development arising predominantly from our new policy of offering Honorary Institutional Membership to institutions with which the Society wishes to improve its relations. There are also 25 Student Members, another most welcome increase, in this case of over a third over the year: the Society would wish to see many more Student Members over the next few years. We are, clearly, at the moment more than merely able to replace those who leave us during the year with new Members. Over the year we welcomed 117 new Members. This means that some 18% of the total Membership are new this year. If we can keep this level of replacement going, the future of the Society is good. The overall size of the Society is, I believe, about right at the present.

We have asked all our new Members where they heard about the Society, and it would seem that they came to us through many different ways. Several joined after checking out our Website. Others came to a Lecture after reading about us in an article in a local newspaper or magazine. Quite a number were inspired by the recent very successful exhibition of our photographs at the Hong Kong University Library. Yet others heard about us by word-of-mouth from existing Members, or from our regular advertisement in “Dollarsaver”, or dropped in on one of Lectures having seen our poster at the City Hall or in one of the Universities. Since all these ways of attracting new Members are working well, we will continue using all these methods of attracting potential new Members during this year.

Our Honorary Treasurer and Vice-President will shortly be reporting on the state of our finances, and I do not want to steal his thunder here, and wish only to say that, as of today, the Society's finances are in a generally satisfactory state, and disclose no cause for undue alarm. We did, however, make a loss over the year.

Last year I warned that, since our routine expenses were not covering our routine expenditure, an increase in the Subscription Fee was inevitable. It is, to repeat what I said last year, the Subscription Fee income on which we depend to provide for the routine expenditure of the Society. This year the Subscription Fee income level was well below the routine expenditure figure. Council has not agreed to any increase in the Subscription Fee to take effect from 1st April 2005. I feel, however, that I must warn you that there will, almost certainly, be a recommendation to increase the Subscription Fee at next year's Annual General Meeting, to take effect from 1st April 2006, since, clearly, we cannot allow this constant drain on our reserves because of weak levels of routine income.

Another point I would like to make was that, at the last Annual General Meeting a Resolution was passed which stated that those Annual Members not paying by Autopay would be charged an additional \$50 a year handling charge to take account of the much higher costs these Members cause to the Society in the handling of their annual subscriptions. I must now say that only 130 Annual Members are paying by Autopay as of today (27%). With great regret, therefore, I must inform you that, over the next few weeks those Annual Members who have not yet converted their subscription payment method to Autopay will receive notice that their Membership Subscription Fee will be surcharged as agreed, unless they change immediately to the Autopay system. Please take urgent steps to change your payment method if you have still not done so!

The Sir Lindsay and Lady Ride Memorial Fund

I am extremely glad to be able to inform you that the three years of work to set up the Sir Lindsay and Lady Ride Memorial Fund has at long last been finalised. Jason Wordie and Robert Nield will be saying a good deal more about this. In brief, in December of last year the Fund was formally established, and it now has in it over half a million dollars. The first book for consideration for publication under the Fund is

currently being given a careful read-over by Hong Kong University Press to see if it is suitable. It is my very real hope that, by this time next year, the first book in our “Hong Kong Studies” series will have been published. In the near future I shall be writing to all the local Universities and others to urge people with suitable books to submit them to us for consideration for publication. Any book written in English, on Hong Kong, its history or society, or on South China generally, which has not been able to be published because of financial constraints, will be considered. The Hong Kong University Press will publish any such book on our behalf, so long as it considers it to be academically of a sufficiently high quality. Members, if they have books which might be suitable, should consider sending them to us for consideration. I must, however, warn that, in practice, it is unlikely that the Society will be able to process more than two, or at the very best three, books a year, and, if we get very large numbers of books submitted, some of them may have to wait for some years before we can process them!

Lecture and Visit Programme

This year we have enjoyed another wide-ranging and interesting programme of lectures and visits. During the year we had 16 lectures, 4 visits to places within Hong Kong and 4 to places outside Hong Kong. Three of the lectures were associated with visits which took place shortly afterwards. Nonetheless, despite the range and interest of the programme, the number of this year’s events show a slight falling off from last year and the year before. The SARS outbreak was to blame for some of this, since, in the early part of last year we were a little careful about putting events into the programme. Recently, we thought we were going to have to give up our lecture venue at the City Hall for some months, and so slowed the programme down, only to find that the long-awaited renovation and refitting of the Extension Activities Room was put off, perhaps to the Autumn, perhaps indefinitely, because of financial restraints. To put this into perspective, last year we had 17 lectures (1 more than this year), 9 local visits (5 more than this year), and 3 visits to places outside Hong Kong as against 4 this year. Last year the programme thus had 29 items on it, and this year only 24. In 2001-2002 there were 24. We will endeavour to do better during this up-coming year! The Council would welcome Members suggesting items for inclusion in the programme. Members willing to lead visits are particularly urged to put themselves forward!

Improved Relationships with other Branches, and Extended Availability of the Journal in Libraries around the World

Council has continued to take action to improve relations with our sister societies around the world, and has also taken action to ensure that full sets of the *Journal* are to be found in more Libraries, both academic and public. I am glad to repeat what I said last year, that full sets of the *Journal* are now to be found in all five of the Regional Libraries of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department (in the City Hall, and in the Kowloon, Shatin, Tuen Mun and Tsuen Wan Regional Libraries), with three sets in the Causeway Bay Central Library. Sets are also available in the Public Library Service in Macau, and in Shenzhen, as well as in Shanghai. Negotiations are in hand to get sets into the library services at Canton and Peking as well.

All the tertiary academic libraries in Hong Kong also now have full sets (two sets at Hong Kong University), as do the libraries of the Museums of the Leisure and Cultural Services Department. We are in process of ensuring that the other Museum libraries in Hong Kong also get sets.

During this upcoming year, Council will continue to try to increase the number of libraries around the world which have the *Journal*.

During the last year, Council had the opportunity of meeting with the current President of the parent Society in London. I hope that this can be taken further during the year.

The Library of the Society

Our Honorary Librarian, Miss Julia Chan, will be reporting separately on the present position with regard to the library. In general, the state of our Library is excellent, and the number of users is rising.

Our Website, which has proved to be of the greatest value in advertising the Society, is currently being up-dated and improved. I urge all Members to check the new format out! I would like to repeat what I have said before, and to thank Moody Tang for all her help in maintaining and up-dating the Website. This is a heavy job, which Moody does extremely well. Thank you, Moody!

Friends of the Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong, in the United Kingdom

I have, in each of the last few years, reminded Members of the existence of our sister Society in the United Kingdom. This useful body allows Members moving from Hong Kong to the United Kingdom to continue their interests in the culture and history of the Hong Kong area, as well as providing a social venue where they can continue to meet up with old friends who, like them, have moved from Hong Kong to the United Kingdom. As to what the Friends do, I will shortly read an Annual Report on their activities sent to us by the Chairman of the Friends, Mr David Gilkes.

Honorary Fellows of the Society

During the year, Council agreed to change the title of Honorary Member of the Society to Honorary Fellow of the Society, since it was felt that this title more accurately indicated to the general public what the Society intends by the grant of the position. Council grants Honorary status to people it considers have deserved recognition by the Society, either because of their outstanding contribution to the development of the study of Hong Kong, and its history and society, or for their outstanding support and dedication to the work of the Society, or both.

Existing Honorary Members have all welcomed this change, and are happy with the change in title. It is Council's aim to extend the status of Honorary Fellow to two or three people every year, and I hope that an announcement of additional Honorary Fellows will be made to you within the next month or two.

Council

Our Programme Co-ordinator, Dr Janet Scott, is retiring shortly from Hong Kong, and has indicated that she will have to give up her position as Co-ordinator as from the middle of the year. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking her for all the huge amount of time and effort she has put into arranging the Programme over the last few years, and wish her the very best in her retirement. Council is actively considering who might take over the arduous post of Co-ordinator after Janet leaves, and will inform Members in due course when someone suitable has been found.

During the year, Council co-opted a significant number of members, to broaden the base of Council's Membership, and to ensure that Council continues to have access to a wide range of experience and advice. Among those co-opted is Chan Kwok-shing, who represents on the Council our sister Society, the Chinese-language South China Research Circle. It is my very real hope that this will lead to continuing deep and close relations between the two Societies. I hope that soon there will be announcements in the *Newsletter* of joint events to be held with the Circle.

Of those thus co-opted, Mr David McKellar has agreed to take over the role and position of Honorary Secretary of the Society, and I would recommend this to you all. I am glad to say, however, Mr Peter Stuckey has agreed to remain on Council as a Member, subject to your agreement. Mr Robert Nield, our Vice-President and Honorary Treasurer, has asked to step down from his position as Honorary Treasurer, and to hand this over to Mr Philip Stockton, another of the newly co-opted Members, retaining his position as Vice-President, so that he can devote more time to the position of Vice-President. I recommend this change to you as well. All the others co-opted during the year Council proposes to co-opt again for this next year. I will shortly ask you to indicate your agreement with this proposal.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude this Report by thanking all Members for their support of the Society during this past year, and for their friendliness and helpfulness to me personally at all times. I would also like to thank our friends at the Antiquities and Monuments Office, the Public Records Office, and elsewhere for their support and assistance.

Dr. Patrick H. Hase
President

19th March, 2004

APPENDIX

Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch

Activities for 2003/2004

Lectures

Date	Lecture
2003	
Friday 25 April	Mr Paul Fonoroff: <i>A General History and Overview of Hong Kong Cinema</i>
Friday 9 May	Mr Tony Banham: <i>The 1941 Hong Kong Garrison – Unabridged</i>
Friday 30 May	Dr Vicky Lee: <i>Memoirs on Eurasianness</i>
Friday 13 June	Mr David Morgan: <i>Through Spanish Eyes: Two Sixteenth Century Spanish Accounts of the China of the Period</i>
Friday 27 June	Dr Graeme Lang: <i>The Return of the Refugee God – Wong Tai Sin in China</i>
Friday 8 th August	Dr. Peter Halliday: <i>The Birth of the Lunatic Asylums in Hong Kong</i>
Friday 29 August	Mr Stephen Selby: <i>Chinese Archery – An Unbroken Tradition</i>
Friday 5 September	Mr Philip Snow: <i>The Fall of Hong Kong: Britain, China, and the Japanese Occupation</i>
Friday 24 October	Mr Joop B. M. Litmaath: <i>Forty Years in Hong Kong – Far East of Amsterdam</i>
Friday 14 November	Dr Louis Ng: <i>Sun Yat-Sen, Hong Kong and the Sam Chau Tin Rebellion</i>
Friday 21 November	Dr Patrick H. Hase: <i>Sha Tau Kok Market and its Market District</i>
Friday 12 December	Mr Andrew Tse: <i>Ho Kom-Tong: A Man For All Seasons</i>
2004	
Friday 16 January	Dr Elizabeth Sinn: <i>Power and Charity: The Rise of the Chinese Merchant Elite in 19th Century Hong Kong</i>
Friday 30 January	M. Alain Le Pichon: <i>The Jardine Matheson Correspondence, 1827-1843</i>
Friday 13 February	Dr Peter Halliday: <i>A History of Suicides in Hong Kong</i>
Friday 27 February	Dr Greg Thomas: <i>From Model to Museum: Yuanming Yuan through European Eyes</i>

Local Visits

Date	Visit
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2003	
Saturday 30 August	Mr Stephen Selby, Leader: <i>Guided Tour of Asian Traditional Archery Exhibition: Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence</i>
Saturday 20 September	Mr Chang Shing-wai, Leader: <i>Behind the Scenes: A Conservation Tour at the Hong Kong Heritage Museum</i>
Saturday 7 November	Dr Patrick H. Hase & Mr Tim Ko, Leaders: <i>Visit to the Zoroastrian Temple and the Parsee, Jewish, and Colonial Cemeteries</i>
2004	
Saturday 10 January	Dr Patrick H. Hase, Leader: <i>Visit to Buddhist Religious Institutions</i>

Visits Outside Hong Kong

Date	Visit
2003	
9-12 October	Dr Joseph Ting, Dr Patrick H. Hase, Dr Guo Deyan, Leaders: <i>Visit to Canton and Whampoa, including the Whampoa Parsee Cemetery and Muslim Institutions</i>
26 October	Mr Jason Wordie, Leader: <i>George Smirnoff's Watercolours of Macau</i>
22-23 November	Dr Patrick H. Hase, Dr Louis Ng, Dr Anthony Siu Leaders: <i>Visit to Sha Tau Kok and its District</i>
2004	
14-26 January	Dr Brian Shaw, Dr Felicity Shaw, Leaders: <i>Visit to Arunachal Pradesh</i>

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY HONG KONG BRANCH LIBRARY

REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2003/2004

As of 1 March 2004, the library collection had increased to 5,081 volumes. A total of 225 volumes were added during the year. Donations of books were received from Dr Patrick Hase, Dr James Hayes, Mr L.B.M. Litmaath, Mrs Mary Painter, Mr Andrew Tse, Mr Mynak R. Tulku (Director of National Library of Bhutan), and Dr Dan Waters. Gift of books were also received from Hungary's Academy of Sciences (Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae), Foundation of Islamic Cultural Propagation in the World, Hong Kong Museum of History, The Siam Society, Sweden Museum of Far Eastern Antiquities. The Journal of the Siam Society and the National History Bulletin from the Siam Society were personally brought back by our Council members, Mr Peter Stuckey and Mr Jason Wordie when they stopped by Bangkok. We would like to thank all our donors and welcome future contributions of old and rare books or journals.

Following the exercise with the Public Libraries last year, great effort was also made to identify missing volumes of the Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in academic and museum libraries in Hong Kong. To keep RASHKB journals up to date so that users will be able to have access to the complete set, Council members agreed to send missing copies to these Libraries on the condition that they will take out a subscription for future issues. All the ten academic institutions including University of Hong Kong, Chinese University of Hong Kong, City University of Hong Kong, Hong Kong Academy of Performing Arts, Hong Kong Baptist University, Hong Kong Institute of Education, Hong Kong Polytechnic University, Hong Kong University of Science & Technology, Lingnan University, and Open University of Hong Kong; as well as three museums, namely Antiquities & Monuments Office, Hong Kong Heritage

Museum and Hong Kong Museum of History now have a complete set of the Society Journal. We will be sending Hong Kong Museum of Medical Sciences a set of the Society Journals soon and are in the process of granting them Honorary Institutional membership with the understanding that they would assist and encourage scholars in using their Museum to write articles on incidents of medical history in Hong Kong for our Journal. The Shanghai Library was also offered Honorary Institutional membership during Patrick Hase's trip to Shanghai.

The Arnold Graham Collection has now been fully processed and catalogued. It was sent to the Conservation Unit of the Hong Kong Central Library for fumigation in April 2003. The Collection comprises a total of 423 volumes, with 361 volumes in English and 62 volumes in Chinese. Since they are of historical and intrinsic value, the whole Collection has been moved to the Rare Book Room. A white round label with the initial "A.G." indicating Arnold Graham is adhered to the spine of each book for easy identification.

At the Council meeting on 22 September 2003, it was resolved that borrowing privileges of Honorary Institutional Members be modified. One membership card will be issued to the Secretary of each of the Honorary Institutional Members and the membership card could be lent to any member of that Institution, but only to one member per month. Each member of that institution would be allowed to borrow only one book at a time for a period of 1 month. Regular members could borrow 3 items at any one time for 2 months with a maximum of 10 items.

Talks of RAS speakers have been recorded in tapes for years. In order to better preserve the content, it was decided that these tapes be digitized if permission is granted by the speaker. The Hong Kong Central Library has kindly offered, for free service, to digitize these tapes since they are produced by the Library. The digitized version will be mounted on the Multimedia Information System, available for convenient access in the Public Libraries via the System. Since retroactive consent of previous talks could not be obtained, it was agreed that while these tapes will be digitized for preservation purpose, the CDs will be placed in the RAS Rare Book Collection, available for use in the Library but not for loan. To date, 6 records (10 tapes) from 1988 to 1994 were digitized, available for listening in the Hong Kong Public Libraries via their Multimedia Information System; 34 records (37 tapes) are in preparation and 38 records (39 tapes) are pending for digitization. There are a total of 78 records (86 tapes).

Council members also expressed interest in digitizing a collection of old RTHK radio programmes related to the history of Asia and Hong Kong in an effort to preserve the culture and heritage of Asia. These are tapes that RTHK will not be able to digitize due to limited resources. The Hong Kong Central Library has requested a list of these titles and arrangement has been made to digitize 11 of them. RAS will pursue digitization for the remaining 34 titles if rights could be obtained.

Following the success of the exhibition of the Society's photo archives on Western District in the University of Hong Kong Libraries in January 2000, a similar exhibition was held in the University Libraries in August 2003. These photographs illustrate domestic, industrial and commercial buildings and interesting street scenes in Sheung Wan and Western District in Hong Kong in the 1960's. Again, it aroused great interest. A Library user spotted a man in a photograph that looked very much like his father and requested a copy of this photograph. The Home Affairs Bureau also requested access to our photo archives to assist them in reviewing their existing policy on heritage preservation. Some of these photos were published in the book: *Hong Kong Going and Gone* and 14 copies were sold during the exhibition. In response to demonstrated interest, a new Committee has now been formed to compile all other photos in the Society not included in *Hong Kong Going and Gone* and publish a brand new book on cultural and architectural heritage of the Central and Western district.

Concerning usage of the RAS Collection, as compared to last year, reference enquiries had increased by 29%. There is a 64% drop in books being loaned out, perhaps users are making use of pleasant environment in the Library to read and research rather than borrowing the books.

As reported by the Hong Kong Central Library, usage of the RAS Library for the period from 1 March 2003 to 29 February 2004 was as follows:

Library Usage

	2002/2003	2003/2004
No. of reference enquiries	179	231
No. of books consulted	408	327
No. of borrowers	28	19
No. of books loaned out	67	24

I would like to take this opportunity to express our appreciation to the Hong Kong Central Library for their assistance and highly professional service to our members during the year.

Ms. Julia Chan

Hon. Librarian

1 March 2004

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY HONG KONG BRANCH LIBRARY

ADDITIONS LIST 2003/2004

Chen, Wen-te and Huang Ying-kuei

Reflection on "Community Studies": anthropological perspectives. Taipei: Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica, 2002.

Choi, Jang Jip

Post-cold war and peace: experiences, conditions and choices. Seoul: Asiatic Research Center, 2003

Dargye, Yonten and Sorensen, P.K.

The biography of Pha 'Brug-sgom-zhig-po called the current of compassion. Thimphu: National Library, 2001.

Drewett, Peter L.

Neolithic Sha Lo Wan: a late Neolithic settlement at Sha Lo Wan, Lantau Island, Hong Kong. London: Archetype Pub., 1995.

Geisert, Bradley Kent

Radicalism and its demise: the Chinese Nationalist Party, factionalism, and local elites in Jiangsu Province, 1924-1931. Ann Arbor, Michigan: Center for Chinese Studies Publications, University of Michigan, c2001.

Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence

Archery traditions of Asia. [Xianggang]: Xianggang hai fang bo wu guan, c2003.

Hong Kong Museum of History

Boundless learning: foreign-educated students of modern China. [Xianggang]: Xianggang li shi bo wu guan, c2003.

Hong Kong Museum of History

Brief guide to Hong Kong Museum of History. Xianggang: Shi zheng ju, c1991.

Hong Kong Museum of History

Napoleon Bonaparte: emperor & man. Hong Kong: Leisure and Cultural Services Department, 2003.

International Conference on Sinology (3rd : 2000 : Taipei, Taiwan)

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NEW JOURNALS

The Siam Society
Journal of the Siam Society
National History Bulletin

Although the number of Friends' activities during the past year cannot compete with those in Hong Kong, it is nevertheless pleasing to report that the quarterly meetings which have taken place have been of a very high standard. They started in May 2003 with a bold and forthright talk by Dr. Francis Wood, entitled "Marco Polo and Me". Dr. Wood is curator of Chinese Collections at the British Library and author of "Did Marco Polo Go To China?" and "No Dogs, Not Many Chinese: Treaty Port Life in China 1843-1943". Her talk was very convincing and one was left in no doubt that there are still many unanswered questions about Marco Polo's trips to China.

The second event took 35 Friends to Bath and Bristol for two days in early October, 2003. Bath has an excellent Museum of East Asian Art, originally set up by Mr. Brian McElny, who lived in Hong Kong for many years in the 1960s and 70s. He became a well-known collector of Chinese artifacts. The museum now houses a wide range of Far Eastern art, including items from South Korea and Japan. Our visit coincided with the very well presented exhibition "Death and Burial: The Chinese and the Afterlife". The Friends were particularly impressed by the emphasis on education and the museum's outreach to local schools. The day ended with a very authentic Chinese meal at the Cathay Rendevoez in Bristol.

The following morning the Friends met at the Empire and Commonwealth Museum, which was opened in Bristol three years ago, with a great deal of local and overseas backing, including the Royal Asiatic Society of Hong Kong. It was particularly pleasing to see Dr. Dan Waters' name inscribed in the entrance hall. The exhibition portrayed in very enlightened and balanced ways a history of the Commonwealth countries, as seen by many of the local people who lived there. The items on display showed that the build-up of Empire and Commonwealth was a remarkable achievement, but there were clearly some aspects which did not come up to the high ideals many expected – this precipitated a lively topic for discussion during the lunch that followed after the visit and the subsequent river cruise through the old town of Bristol.

Our third event, in November 2003, was a lecture by Mr. Martin Palmer entitled "Da Qin – An Imperial Christian Site of the Tang Dynasty". Mr. Palmer, a sinologist and theologian and Secretary General of the Alliance of Religions and Conservation, has lectured world-wide, including to the Royal Asiatic Society of Hong Kong, and gave a riveting talk about the recent Da Qin excavations, which had brought to light the remains of the earliest Christian church in West China, dating back to the seventh century.

Last, but not least, the Friends met over Chinese New Year for a good meal at the Joy King Lau Restaurant in Soho, to welcome in the Year of the Monkey.

For the organization of the above events we again have to thank Mrs. Anita Wilson and Mrs. Rosemary Lee, ably supported by other members of the committee: Mr. Paul Bolding, Secretary, Mr. Roger Candler, Treasurer, Mrs. Kirsty Norman and Mr. Keith Stevens. As a committee, we try and meet at the Oriental Club in London two or three times per year; in 2003 we were especially pleased to have Dr. Patrick Hase at our August meeting. He brought us up-to-date with your events and other matters in Hong Kong. We value this interaction and I was particularly pleased to be invited to attend your December Council Meeting.

The Friends in the United Kingdom, like you in Hong Kong, continue to look to the future and broaden the activities and enlarge our membership. It is therefore very gratifying to report that on 19th May, 2004 arrangements have been made to hold a joint meeting with the Royal Society for Asian Affairs, 2 Belgrave Square, London, when our own Mr. Keith Stevens will lecture on "China/UK Training Chinese Guerrillas (1941-45): a token operation in war-time China". It is hoped that further joint meetings with the RSAA can be arranged.

Our annual general meeting will take place on 5th June, 2004 and any RAS Hong Kong Branch members are welcome to attend. It will be preceded by a light Chinese lunch at "Poon's" and followed by what promises to be an interesting talk about Captain Plant, who is buried in the Hong Kong cemetery and who navigated the Yangtse River in the 19th century. Dr. Michael Gillam, a direct descendant of Captain Plant, will be our lecturer.

- to hold Saturday morning workshops with AMO staff to discuss various aspects of conservation and heritage, which might include presentations or talks by Volunteers or other interested parties;
- to catalogue the store of salvaged architectural materials and artifacts held by the Architectural Services Department with a view to transferring the collection to AMO's store at North Point for restoration and re-use in suitable projects.

Any other suggestions for future activities are welcome.

4. Friends of Heritage

The Friends of Heritage Scheme was launched in 1997 to recruit volunteers to assist in heritage conservation and promotional work. AMO are now recruiting the Fifth Batch of Friends of Heritage and an application form can be picked up from the AMO Reception Desk, 136 Nathan Road, Tsimshatsui if you are interested in joining up. Further details of the scheme are given in the application form. RAS secretary Mary Painter also has a supply of these forms; if you call her on 2813 7500 she will post one to you.

5. Kom Tong Hall

Although the Volunteers did not have any involvement, our President, Dr. Patrick Hase, did obtain a personal assurance from the Secretary for Home Affairs that the building would not be demolished. The present position is that AMO are drawing up conservation guidelines for the architect for the proposed Sun Yat-sen Museum to follow.

6. Rennies Mill

Many of you may know the old ruin on top of the hill overlooking the site of the old Rennies Mill. There have been various suggestions regarding the original use or purpose of the structure which consists of a ruined tower and small village-type house. These suggestions are that the tower might have been a lighthouse, silo, Martello tower, fort, folly or a windmill. However, our President, Dr. Patrick Hase, and RAS Council Member and local historian, Mr. Ko Tin-keung, have identified the structure as an old Imperial Maritime Customs Post built probably in the latter half of the 19th century. It was leased by the Hong Kong Milling Company from 1905 to 1925. AMO are looking for a volunteer to carry out further research. Is anyone interested?

7. Early Modernist Buildings

The Executive Secretary (Antiquities & Monuments), Dr. Louis Ng would like us to draw up a list of early modernist style (Bauhaus, International, Art Deco) buildings still remaining. Examples include the Royal Hong Kong Yacht Club (1941), Wan Chai Market (1937) and the Vice-Chancellor's Residence, HKU (1950). If anyone knows of any such buildings please let me know the address. When I have got a list together I will organize a field trip to assess them.

8. Government Policy on Built Heritage Conservation

Government is now reviewing the policy on built heritage conservation and is consulting the public. A Consultation Document (Executive Summary) can be picked up at the AMO Reception Desk, 136 Nathan Road, Tsimshatsui. Comments and views should be sent to the Home Affairs Bureau by 18 May 2004.

9. New Members

I would like to welcome the following new members of the Volunteers :-

<u>Name</u>	<u>Interests</u>
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The first issue of the new journal “*International Journal of Asian Studies*” is now available as part of the Cambridge Journals Online service. Go to <http://journals.cambridge.org/phpAds/adclick.php?bannerid=1740>. Their subscription will entitle you to 24-hours a day access to the full-text of current and archived articles.

Other Asian studies journals: you can view the full list of Asian studies journals published by Cambridge at <http://journals.cambridge.org/phpAds/adclick.php?bannerid=1741>

Keep up-to-date with content in IJAS as it is published. Sign up to receive email alerts when new content is published online in IJAS at <http://journals.cambridge.org/phpAds/adclick.php?bannerid=1742>.

If you would like to receive a printed copy of the first issue of IJAS, please send your postal address to: <mailto:asi@cambridge.org?subject=samplerequest>.

International Centre for Chinese Heritage and Archaeology

University College, London has established a new International Centre for Chinese Heritage and Archaeology in collaboration with Peking University. The following website gives details in a short article:-

<http://www.ucl.ac.uk/news/archive/january-2004/latest/newsitem.shtml?04010501>

Exhibitions at the University Museum and Art Gallery, University of Hong Kong **Anthology of Ink: Ancient Chinese Painting and Calligraphy from the Dr. S. Y. Yip Collection** 27 March to 6 June 2004

The University Museum and Art Gallery of The University of Hong Kong is pleased to present the exhibition “Anthology of Ink: Ancient Chinese Painting and Calligraphy from the Dr. S. Y. Yip Collection”. It features over eighty examples of Chinese painting and calligraphy from the collection of Dr. S. Y. Yip, a local collector who is best known for his connoisseurship in ancient Chinese furniture.

Painting and calligraphy represent Chinese art at its finest. The Chinese artist masters the brush and ink on paper or silk before attempting to capture the essence of the subject, with a few simple brush strokes or an intricate pattern. This exhibition provides a rare opportunity for visitors to view many examples of painting and calligraphy that have never been shown in public before. Its main focus is on Ming and Qing painting and calligraphy, but the exhibit also includes a sutra dated to the Tang dynasty.

Due to the popularity of the exhibition, **Early Hong Kong Brothels**, the University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong will extend the exhibition period until 30 May 2004. (See our December 2003 newsletter for details).

The Museum opening hours are Monday to Saturday 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.; Sundays 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. The Museum is closed on public holidays. Admission is free. All are welcome.

Please visit the Museum website www.hku.hk/hkumag or call 2241-5512 for further information.

New Publication

Administering Empire: an annotated checklist of personal memoirs and related studies

Compiled by Terry Barringer

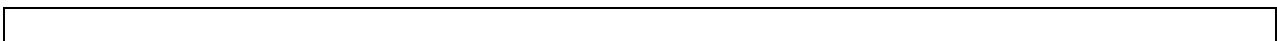
Institute of Commonwealth Studies, School of Advanced Study, University of London, 2004.

ISSN 1742-4992 Paperback GBP15.00 including postage to Hong Kong

This bibliography, of the Colonial Service in the 20th century, consists mainly of memoirs by those who administered the British empire, but includes some ‘related studies’ and gives a basis for considering the

personalities and training of those who spent some or all of their working lives in the colonies. Also, with its indices of Colonies, Territories and Areas and Professional Services and other Special Groups, it provides an excellent start for those who may be interested in developing their own studies in the area.

In this publication, Terry Barringer presents herself as an enthusiast for her subject as much as the professional librarian that she is. Having been librarian of the Royal Commonwealth Society's library in Northumberland Avenue for many years, she accompanied the RCS collection to Cambridge, after it was sold to Cambridge University Library. Currently, she is a research officer at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, working on the history of the British Colonial Service, with the support of the Overseas Service Pensioners' Association. She is review editor for *The Round Table*, "Britain's oldest international affairs Journal".



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